

Wei Wuxian's Terrible, Horrible, No Good First Meeting With His Future

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by [Enigmatree](#)

Summary

Wei Wuxian is expecting to have a nice day learning from Lan Qiren and bugging Lan Wangji and Jiang Cheng in the Cloud Recesses.

He's not expecting to see a portal open and drop out a fake Lan Wangji carrying a madman demonic cultivator that the fake Lan Wangji calls Wei Ying.

Too bad that's what he gets.

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An entirely self-indulgent mini story I wrote because I love young characters coming across their older, eviler, and very incomprehensible selves. There's absolutely no plot.

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

It's their second month in the Cloud Recesses, and Wei Wuxian is surprised to find that they're actually starting to learn some interesting things. For example; the advanced cultivational technique that they're being taught that day, used for shoving away the spirits in a nearby radius.

Lan Qiren brings them all to the training grounds to demonstrate it, as it is —predictably— against the rules to use it inside a room. The technique seems to have been inspired by musical cultivation and while the application itself is pretty cool, Wei Wuxian is honestly more interested in how it works than learning the trick for it. Musical cultivation is really very much not like what Wei Wuxian had imagined when Jiang Cheng first told him that they were going to spend a year learning from some sect with *three thousand* rules whose cultivators are all quiet and peaceful and cultivate with music.

Soon enough, the entire class is standing in rows as they try the technique out. Lan Qiren stands in front of them, checking their progress and calling out occasionally to correct some mistakes— most often at Nie Huaisang, who sucks at cultivation, and at Jin Zixuan, who sucks at music and has a terrible sense of rhythm. Jiang Cheng and Wei Wuxian both go through the motions easily enough, so Wei Wuxian's mind turns rapidly towards more stimulating ranges.

“Do you think this can be directed to one direction?” Wei Wuxian whispers as he flows from one move to another, “I just think it's a waste of energy to make a whole sphere you know?”

“Shut up Wei Wuxian,” Jiang Cheng whispers back, glancing nervously towards Lan Qiren, “Be quiet! You don't even need to worry about this little energy, why the hell are you complaining? Look at Nie Huaisang. He's already out of breath, but do you see him complaining about the energy output—?”

“This is too tiring!” Nie Huaisang cries out right then, and if Wei Wuxian didn't know better he would think Nie Huaisang had heard them and was messing with Jiang Cheng. “I can't do it anymore, ah, it takes too much energy!”

Wei Wuxian slowly raises one smug brow at Jiang Cheng.

“Tsk!” Jiang Cheng looks away, face red, and he refuses to look back at Wei Wuxian's grinning face. “Not a word, Wei Wuxian. Not a word!”

But when has Wei Wuxian ever stopped because Jiang Cheng asked him to? Never. The answer is never.

“Hahaha!” Wei Wuxian doubles over laughing, “Your face, haha! Jiang Cheng how does it feel to be so thin-skinned? Must be terrible, ah, terrible indeed! You'll suffer this humiliation for months, haha!”

“Oh you certainly wouldn't know, would you, you shameless idiot!” Jiang Cheng says, only to receive a scathing glare from Lan Wangji who has meandered close as he keeps an eye on the students out of his uncle's field of view.

“Be quiet,” Lan Wangji orders them, “You’re disrupting the class.”

“Sorry Second Young Master Lan,” Jiang Cheng stops practicing to salute Lan Wangji, and then he yanks Wei Wuxian into a bow as well. “Come on, apologise to Second Young Master Lan!”

“Sorry Lan Zhan!” Wei Wuxian chirps, and Lan Wangji predictably glares at him before turning around and leaving.

“Aand you’ve done it,” Jiang Cheng mutters from the side of his mouth, “Do you *have* to use his given name? He hates you even more now.”

“He doesn’t hate me,” Wei Wuxian says, mostly to be contrary. He knows very well how much he annoys Lan Wangji on a daily basis.

Right around then, Lan Qiren comes back around to their side and finds himself occupied with Nie Huaisang again. “This sort of lazy, unmotivated practice is simply unsightly,” He says, “You will never learn the technique nor improve your stamina if you don’t work!”

“Teacher Lan, ah, Teacher Lan I can’t!” Nie Huaisang cries, “It’s too hard, my core is already empty!”

Lan Qiren’s face falls into stern disapproval. “It’s too hard because you are not trying properly! See here, when you’re turning, your feet must be—”

“*LAN WANGJI!*” Calls a furious voice right then, interrupting him.

Lan Qiren whirls around to berate whoever it had been that shouted his unfailingly perfect nephew’s name so accusingly, only to be faced with a group of students who all look at him with shocked, confused eyes.

“Who was that? Who is shouting in the middle of class?” Lan Qiren demands, “Wangji, who was it?”

But Wei Wuxian can see that Lan Wangji’s face is as confused as the people next to him.

“It didn’t come from anyone here, Uncle,” Lan Wangji says, looking around himself. There is only the elegant buildings, the peaceful morning air, the confused crowd of students, and nothing else.

“*Hand that demon over!*” Comes another voice, croaky and old, like that of an elderly woman. It echoes strangely, not coming from anywhere specific but seeming to appear out of thin air. There is still no one around them.

“*Lan Wangji! Come to your senses!*” Says yet another voice, just as old, this one male. “*Do you wish to be a traitor to the Lan Sect?!*”

The entire class seems to suck in a cold breath at that, and Lan Wangji visibly takes a step back, his face pale. Lan Qiren’s expression is livid. “What kind of malicious illusion is this?!” He demands, before turning around to face Wei Wuxian, “Is this your making? This

kind of— unacceptable prank? I should have known better than to ask Wangji to supervise your punishment, you ruffian! You're taking your anger out of him!"

"No, wait— Teacher Lan!" Wei Wuxian protests, "It's not me! I wouldn't do something like this! I don't even know *how* to make illusions!"

"Lan Wangji!"

"Hanguang-jun!"

"Let go of that devil!"

"Lan Wangji!!"

And, amongst those elderly people, a familiar —if deeper than expected— voice. *"Wangji! A-Zhan, A-Zhan you can't do this!"*

"...Xiongzhang?" Lan Wangji whispers, and Wei Wuxian is standing close enough to him that he hears the tremor in that word.

"Wangji, please," Lan Xichen's voice seems to sob, *"Wangji— Wangji, don't do this! You know how it ends... It's too late, he's not the man you used to know! A-Zhan—"*

"GAH!"

"You dare attack an elder, Lan Wangji?! You deserve to be whipped to death!"

"A-Zhan! Please, please stop!"

"Ahh! Stop him!!"

The open area is filled with students that stand deathly silent in a way that Lan Qiren can never achieve, each and every one of them looking around themselves anxiously. The yelling and screaming are getting clearer and clearer every second, and the sound no longer seems like it's coming from everywhere all at once. Instead, it's coming from right ahead of them, across the training grounds.

And there, Wei Wuxian glimpses the first blurry smudge of darkness that coalesces into a slice of another world. "Ah!" He lets out unconsciously, and Jiang Cheng startles next to him, "Look there! What's that?"

"What's wha—what?!" Jiang Cheng gasps, before he also exclaims; "Teacher Lan, there's something over there!"

Lan Qiren immediately turns towards the blurry, dark mist that hangs in the air. The rest of the students step closer to each other, watching the mist move and shift into shapes nearly recognizable.

Wei Wuxian lets out a shocked breath when it changes. The mist wavers into the image of jagged, dark mountains. There, in the distance, is man in bloody white robes who is pulling a

mess of tattered black cloth close to him on one side and fighting off a horde of white blurs with the other hand.

The man's chest is heaving, his long black hair scattering in the air as he sends his sword towards the attackers with one gesture, and he turns away and runs, as if towards the mist, and towards them.

The sword flies through the darkness like a white comet. It shoves five cultivators out of the way in a magnificent show of skill before it slams back into the man's free hand, and the man immediately uses it to send another attacker flying into a blurry cliff wall.

"LAN WANGJI!" One of the smudged-white attackers yells, enraged, as he rushes at the bloody man with his sword raised, *"You're no better than your mother was! Murderer! Traitor!"*

"What— what is this?" Lan Qiren asks, and his voice is trembling, "What kind of evil trickery— how dare they?! To besmirch Wangji's reputation this way—!"

But luckily for Lan Qiren's blood pressure, most of the dark mist seems to be fading, and both the blurry white-robed attackers and the jagged black cliffs are disappearing.

Except— the bloody-robed man and the one he's supporting by his side are becoming clearer and clearer as he runs towards the screen of mist. Soon enough, the shouts of the attackers are too far away to be heard, coming as if through water, while the bloody man is close enough to run out of the mist.

The man does one last sweep of his white sword and throws the nearest attackers off of his back, before leaping forward.

He bursts out of the dark mists and lands right in the middle of the training grounds.

The mist completely disappears.

All that's left is the man heaving for breath in what are obviously bloody Lan robes, and the dishevelled, limp person he's carrying. Whether or not the man realizes where he is, the first thing he does is to look desperately towards the person he has pulled to his chest, his lashes lowered as he folds the person close.

Wei Wuxian suddenly notices that the man's lips are moving, whispering something through harsh breaths into the person's matted, loose hair. When Wei Wuxian strains to understand what the man is saying, it seems to be weak a mantra of, "...it'll be okay," and, "We'll be okay, I'm here. I'm here."

"Who are you?!" Lan Qiren yells, hand on his sword as he pushes forward and keeps all the students to his back. "Identify yourself!"

The bloodied man's head snaps up. Wei Wuxian heart somersaults in his chest.

The man's eyes are golden.

And the man's face is...

"Wangji?!" Lan Qiren exclaims, shocked, and as if to take a better look, he takes a step closer to the man.

The man with Lan Wangji's face immediately draws back and points a fake Bichen at Lan Qiren, pulling the person in his arm protectively to his chest, head tucked next to his jaw.

"Stay back!" The man orders in a hoarse, nearly emotional voice that Wei Wuxian has never heard Lan Wangji use, and he's still trying to regulate his breath as he repeats; "Stay back, Uncle."

Lan Qiren freezes in place.

The students can hardly breath, let alone speak.

The image of what looks like Lan Wangji pointing his sword to Lan Qiren is too shocking for any of them to be able to react. Nobody can say anything.

Then, interrupting the tense standoff, the head of tangled hair on the fake Lan Wangji's shoulder starts laughing. This close, it's clear that it's a man, and his talon-thin hands grasp onto the fake Lan Wangji's dirty, bloody robes as he laughs hard enough to bow onto him. "It worked," He laughs, mad and delighted both, "It worked, it worked, hahaha!"

He shifts his head in the crook of fake Lan Wangji's neck, and a pair of bloody red eyes turns towards where Wei Wuxian and Jiang Cheng are standing. Resentful energy billows out around the man like a heavy coat. He's laughing so hard that if fake Lan Wangji wasn't clutching him close enough for their chests to be plastered together, he'd have fallen over.

"Worked, worked, it worked," The man laughs, "Jiang Cheng's here, Shijie's alive, home is still standing, hahahaha! It worked!"

Wei Wuxian doesn't know what manner of demon or yao this is, but he really doesn't like the way it's talking. It sounds eerily familiar. It... says things that are eerily familiar.

"What?" Fake Lan Wangji asks, tilting his face towards the man with his guarded, narrow eyes still on Lan Qiren, and his voice carries a tone of pleading for a response as he says; "Wei Ying... Wei Ying, what have you done? What is this?"

Wei Ying.

Wei Ying?

"What?" Wei Wuxian mutters, stepping closer to Jiang Cheng who reaches snake-fast to grab his wrist. "That's not— it can't—"

This madman with red eyes and resentful energy boiling out of him, clutching a fake Lan Wangji to be able to stand up, cannot be in any way related to Wei Wuxian.

Can he?

“Lan Zhan, oh, Lan Zhan,” The man says, in a near croon, hysterical laughter still in his voice. He twists around to reach for fake Lan Wangji’s face with two bony hands, and fake Lan Wangji breathes out so shakily between the man’s palms that it’s almost a sob. “I did it, Lan Zhan, I managed to twist time! It worked, haha, Lan Zhan, Lan Zhan, look!”

From next to him, the real Lan Wangji’s eyes flick towards Wei Wuxian, and both of them look away at the same time.

Lan Zhan, Lan Zhan, look!

So familiar. It’s such a familiar phrase. Such a terribly familiar phrase.

“And see, it’s a mini me!” The man is looking directly at Wei Wuxian, his lips tilted into something almost like a smile, but wrong, “And a mini you! Aaw, and even Jiang Chen, look how soft he looks! I brought us back, Lan Zhan, look I brought us back!”

The man stumbles forward as if to see them better, and the fake Lan Wangji pulls him back to himself by the waist, fake Bichen still held protectively between the man and Lan Qiren.

“Time-travel, they all said I couldn’t do it but I did it, haha, see!” The man laughs again, “Wen Qing said I couldn’t, but I did! When she learns that I—”

He stops. He doesn’t continue.

The fake Lan Wangji’s face is painful to look at.

“We can change whatever we want, Lan Zhan,” The man murmurs this time, head tilting on fake Lan Wangji’s shoulder to look up at him, while fake Lan Wangji just nods and nods again, agreeing with whatever the man says. “I can keep them safe, I can, they’ll all be safe, Shijie, Shijie will be safe, and Lotus Pier, and Wen Qing and Wen Ning, they’ll be safe, A-Yuan—” Then he suddenly changes tracks, “You can kill whoever you like! Lan Zhan, Hanguang-jun, Wen Xu’s still alive, you can get revenge! And Wen Chao—” The man’s eyes flash bloody-crimson, ominous, “Wen *Chao*.”

Wei Wuxian feels like his head is spinning. There are so many names there, so many emotions, so many stories. He notices Lan cultivators creeping closer from around the buildings, likely at Lan Qiren’s behest, and he hopes that they capture these two insane people because he has so many questions.

He doesn’t want answers from madmen, but he desperately needs *something*.

“Wei Ying,” Fake Lan Wangji says, eyeing the Lan cultivators approaching them. “Wei Ying, we have to go.”

“I can do it for you, whoever you want, I don’t mind,” The man continues murmuring, “I’ll kill them for you. If you want, even Wen Ruohan, Lan Zhan, do you want me to destroy the Wen Sect? Should I destroy the Wen Sect? I can do it, Lan Zhan, I brought the Seal with me — I think I should—”

“Later,” Fake Lan Wangji says softly, as if this is just some minor matter that can be discussed now or later, “Not now, Wei Ying. We have to go.”

The man is still talking about killing Wen Ruohan, destroying the Wen Sect, torturing Wen Xu, *if Lan Zhan would like him to, it's really no trouble, he really doesn't mind, just say the word—*

Wei Wuxian is going to be sick.

Then fake Lan Wangji spots Lan Qiren unsheathing his sword and the Lan cultivators closing in on them, and he finally just hefts the man by his waist and leaps onto fake Bichen.

His golden eyes as he looks at the Lan cultivators are ice-cold. There's something in them that might just be fury. Wei Wuxian has never seen the real Lan Wangji make such a face, not even when he replaced his precious book with porn, not even when they first met on top of the roof. He hadn't even known that Lan Wangji's face could look like that.

“Follow us—” Fake Lan Wangji declares with that same matter-of-fact voice that real Lan Wangji uses when reciting rules, “And die.”

With that final threat, he rockets out of the Cloud Recesses on his sword.

The Lan cultivators mount their own swords to follow after him, while Wei Wuxian just stands there on the hill with Jiang Cheng on one side and Lan Wangji on the other. All three of them are stiff enough to emulate rocks— especially Lan Wangji; his face is visibly dazed, and he can't seem to look at Wei Wuxian or his uncle.

Fair enough. Wei Wuxian also can't seem to look anyone in the eyes.

“That...” Lan Qiren says finally, with a rough, forcefully casual voice, clearing his throat to lecture; “And— as you can see, this sort of illusion can be caused by some specific types of yao. When nighthunting, you, you must be careful of shapeshifting creatures and mind-curses. We will study them later at... later sometime. Now everybody back to the dorms! Class dismissed!”

Wei Wuxian has studied yaos and creatures. He has been on enough nighthunts to have made a name for himself.

He knows that there are no monsters powerful enough to cast such a sudden illusion in the middle of the Cloud Recesses, on a powerful master like Lan Qiren and a dozen golden core cultivators. And a shapeshifter that doesn't copy the person exactly but changes their ages and clothes and physical states... there is no such thing.

What kind of creature would go to such trouble and not even try to feed on anyone?

“Wei Wuxian,” Jiang Cheng says from next to him. “Didn't you say... you promised you wouldn't touch it. Resentful energy... You promised, right? Your words, you wouldn't go back on them. Right?”

Wei Wuxian swallows over a sandpaper dry throat. “Right, right— yeah. No. I wouldn’t. That was a weird monster, wasn’t it? Haha, I’ve never seen anything like that!”

Nobody actually believes they were yao.

End Notes

There's absolutely no plot and very little effort (and not nearly enough editing) in this fic, but I hope someone likes it anyways :D

Comment your thoughts!

EDIT: I now have a twitter if anyone wishes to watch me scream headcanons into void and also retweet stuff I personally like

[twitter](#)

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